104

THE CHECHEN CONFLICT AND RUSSIAN DEMOCRATIC DEVELOPMENT

Y 4. SE 2: 104-2-10

The Chechen Conflict and Russian De...

HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

ONE HUNDRED FOURTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

MARCH 6, 1996

Printed for the use of the
Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe

[CSCE 104–2–10]

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THE CHECHEN CONFLICT AND RUSSIAN DEMOCRATIC DEVELOPMENT

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 6, 1996

COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE,
Washington, D.C.

The Commission met, pursuant to adjournment, at 10:05 a.m., in room 2200, Rayburn House Office Building, The Honorable Christopher Smith [Commission Chairman] presiding.

Commissioners present: Hon. Benjamin Cardin.

Also present: Sergei Kovalev, Jack Matlock, Jr., and Anatol Lieven.

OPENING STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

Mr. SMITH. The Commission will come to order. Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to this hearing of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe on the subject of the crisis in Chechnya and its effect on democratic development in Russia. My name is Congressman Chris Smith, and I am Chairman of the Commission. The Commission is a bipartisan agency of the Federal Government mandated to monitor compliance with the Helsinki Accords and related documents, and the situation in Chechnya is one in which the Commission is greatly concerned. Moreover, we should make no mistake about it; developments in Chechnya will inevitably affect long-term development in Russia, and developments in Russia will inevitably affect our own country and the rest of the world.

Former Soviet General Secretary Gorbachev once called the war in Afghanistan a "bleeding wound" as the Soviet army was bogged down in what was seemingly an unwinnable war there. From afar the Chechen conflict appears to be a bleeding wound that could derail the development of democracy in Russia. President Yeltsin himself has stated that his reelection depends on ending the conflict, yet he appears committed to a military victory, and he has surrounded himself with hardline advisers on Chechnya.

Chechen military forces have been clearly hurt by the weight of the Russian military machine, and Moscow has shown that, despite pledges as a member of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe to seek to avoid civilian casualties during hostilities in its own territory, it is quite capable and willing to call in artillery and airstrikes on civilian targets at the least provocation. Still, while many Chechens would welcome an end to hostilities, Chechen military leaders still appear committed to total removal of Moscow's political authority in light of the many atrocities carried out against the civilian population.

We had hoped that with the signing of the OSCE-brokered military agreement in July 1995 between Russian and Chechen representatives that there would be a light at the end of the tunnel for the people of Chechnya: Chechens, Russians, Ingush, and other ethnic groups caught up in the terror of war. Unfortunately that has not happened. The war drags on. Casualty lists on both sides mount. People disappear, including a prominent American humanitarian aid worker and an American freelance journalist. Entire families are split and dislocated. The breakdown in law and order has forced humanitarian organizations, such as Doctors Without Borders, to withdraw to a safer location.

Meanwhile, the effectiveness of the OSCE mission in Grozny is now coming under question. The mandate of the mission includes promoting reconstruction of the "constitutional order" and investigating human rights violations. Other than the now-lapsed military agreement, results have been meager. Although, in fairness, the circumstances have certainly been trying.

When the Commission held its first hearings on Chechnya in January of last year, I noted that the hostilities had remained localized. They no longer have. Brutal and devastating conflict has spread to southern Russia and the neighboring Russian Federation territory of Dagestan. Armed hijackers claiming sympathy for the Chechen cause have seized a passenger ship in a Turkish port. A packet of radioactive material was found in a Moscow park after a journalist received a tip from Chechen commandos who claimed that they had buried it there.

When Moscow made its official full-scale military assault on Grozny, I felt that the administration's response was too easily interpreted to Moscow as a green light from the United States to continue full military activities. I would also note that in response to the hostage situation and the carnage in January of this year, the Secretary of Defense said that the Russian Government was acting "entirely correctly in resisting this hostage-taking effort." Now, for the record, I would also reject hostage-taking and assaults on civilians. Nevertheless, I wonder what kind of message that statement sends to Moscow, given the Russian military's disdain so far for avoiding civilian casualties. The United States, of course, is not perfect in dealing with hostage situations, but we do try to learn from our mistakes and take corrective action and measures when government officials and agencies exceed their authority.

Our witnesses today are exceptionally qualified to examine the Chechen crisis and its effect on democratic developments in Russia.

It is our pleasure to welcome back to Capitol Hill our colleague from the Russian Duma, Sergei Kovalev, although I'm sure Mr. Kovalev would have preferred not to speak again on the subject of Chechnya, as he did before this body in January of last year. Mr. Kovalev is a biologist by profession, but we know him better for his outstanding work in the field of human rights. A former political prisoner in the Soviet Union, he is currently a member of the Russian State Duma and was re-elected in the December 1995 Duma elections. Mr. Kovalev recently resigned from President Yeltsin's Human Rights Commission in protest against policy shifts in the Yeltsin administration, specifically the excessive use of force in Chechnya.

Our next witness was "our man in Moscow" for 4 years, and during those years that really shook the world when the former Soviet Union changed dramatically and forever hopefully. Ambassador Jack Matlock, U.S. Ambassador to the Soviet Union from 1987 to 1991, is now Kathryn and Shelby Cullom Davis Professor of International Diplomacy at Columbia University, in New York City. A 35-year veteran of the U.S. Foreign Service, his well-received book on the collapse of the Soviet Union, "Autopsy of an Empire," was published in November of last year.

Our third witness, Mr. Anatol Lieven, is a journalist well known for his perceptive and informative reporting from Moscow and numerous other locales in the former Soviet Union. From 1990 to 1995, Mr. Lieven was with the *Times of London* in the Soviet Union, and he has been covering the Chechnya crisis since 1992. He was commended by the British Press Association last year for his coverage of the Russian bombardment and attack on Grozny. Currently a Senior Fellow at the U.S. Institute of Peace, Mr. Lieven is also author of the book, "The Baltic Revolution: Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, and the Path to Independence."

Gentlemen, I very deeply appreciate your readiness to appear before the Commission today and look forward to your testimony.

STATEMENT OF SERGEI KOVALEV, MEMBER, RUSSIAN DUMA

INTERPRETER. Mr. Chairman, Mr. Kovalev has asked that I read part of his statement in English, and he has decided to depart a little bit from the rest of his prepared statement, so I will read part of it, and then he will read in Russian, and I will translate. Thank you very much.

"Dear colleagues, ladies, and gentlemen, when, a year ago, I had the honor of appearing before you, the situation in Russia was tragically undefined. The city of Grozny had already been destroyed, thousands and thousands of innocent persons had already perished. The trust of Russian society in the authorities who had unleashed the war, after having declared their commitment to democracy, human rights, and freedom, had been undermined. But there was still hope for an early peace, for a return to a slow but continual advance of Russia toward democracy and freedom. Since then, many events have taken place that have dispelled these hopes.

"We have seen terrorist attacks in Budennovsk and Kizlar, attempts at negotiations, and the resumption of military activity in its most despicable, drawn-out, and cruel form. We have seen an unjustified, punitive operation carried out in Samashki and a shameful act of revenge in Pervomaiskoe. We have seen in Chechnya phony elections declared genuine and valid. We have gone through parliamentary elections that have demonstrated a lack of cohesion between democratic politicians and brought victory to Communist forces who were able to take full advantage of public discontent.

"We see that with every passing day resources and power have become increasingly concentrated in the hands of force structures and special services outside of civilian control. We see how the state apparatus ever more assertively rids itself of employees who are sympathetic to democracy and puts in their place people of the

opposite persuasion, frequently incompetent, besmirched, in fact, with lies and blood. We continue to hear every day blatant and senseless disinformation emanating from highly placed government officials. We choke on pre-election demagoguery, behind which there lies nothing except the desire for power."

Mr. KOVALEV. [Through interpreter] Mr. Chairman, at this point I'm going to sharply depart from the written testimony that I had already submitted to the Commission. I'm doing this to draw attention to a series of circumstances associated with Chechnya that I believe have serious implications, and the political developments in my country. Mr. Chairman, I will not go into details. These details have already been examined and written down by our observer mission in Chechnya itself. These results have already been published. They've been published in English. I have given these booklets to Mr. Finerty [Commission staff member]. I trust that the Commission will be able to acquaint themselves with them.

Mr. Chairman, you have asked me to evaluate the latest statement by President Yeltsin regarding Chechnya. Mr. Chairman, these statements are unclear but they all come to one thing; they come to a parallel attempt to try to find a peaceful solution, but to isolate and to destroy the groups of Chechen partisans. Lately we have seen the results of this attempt to isolate and destroy these Chechen partisan groups. For instance, Federal forces only in the past few days have destroyed several populated Chechen areas. In eastern Chechnya, the following villages have been entirely destroyed: Novo Grozneusky, Sharoi, Aleroi, Centroi, and several others. The western part of Chechnya right now is being subjected to a cruel attack. A village called Bamut was actually destroyed last year. On the road to Bamut, the Federal forces attacked, shot up, and caused civilian industry—injuries to a village, Arshty, which is not even in Chechnya, but an Ingush village.

Not only that, the town of Sernovodsk, which has at least 15,000 people, including refugees, has also been subjected to an aerial shelling. We have also heard that in this former resort, Sernovodsk, because of the shelling, at least 3,000 people are buried under the rubble as a result of the air attack.

It appears that the plan that Yeltsin is supposed to announce tomorrow, the 7th of March, will include a military attack and will try to destroy these military units. In any event, it certainly appears that these military efforts are a very substantial element of the efforts, and I am ashamed to say it, of peace creating the peace. Naturally, these military actions cause the opposite effect, and I just got a phone call this morning from Moscow. We have heard that for about 12 hours now in the capital, in Grozny, Chechen partisans have broken through into the center of the town and are now besieging the government building.

I have come here not only with this information, but also with a criticism, so to speak, also to the West and to the United States. This criticism, so to speak, seems to me entirely natural.

So as not to go into much detail, I will just present one clear and simple example. Everybody remembers how the mission of the OSCE in a cowardly manner left Grozny in December of last year. It left because it said there was no guarantee of its own security there. However, everybody understood that it was not a security

concern, and they were not afraid of bombs. They were afraid of the elections that took place on December 17. Everybody knew that they were really afraid of the phony election and the falsification, and the worst kind of falsification, and falsification of elections organized by the Federal Government itself. This mission, representing a high-level international organization, really did not want to get into a quarrel with the government that had organized these elections.

But for me the most offensive thing that I received concerning this was not an explanation that I got just from anywhere, this was from the foreign affairs committee of the Bundestag. "Don't you understand that the departure of the mission was actually a demarche, that this was a protest against the elections?" I had to ask them, I said, though, "But do you know any Russian politician who would interpret your fleeing as a protest?"

Unfortunately, the attitude of the West to many events taking place in Russia, tragic events taking place in Russia, reminds one of the actions and the attitude of that mission in Chechnya.

So in concluding my somewhat long presentation, I would like to go back to the recommendations made by my respected colleague Academic Andrei Sakharov. In 1987 when a new era was just opening up in my country, Andrei Dmitrevich said that "Russia needs assistance, but it needs pressure." This is a complex task for the countries of the civilized world, because both support and pressure must be strictly designated and it must be clearly applied in doses. But if we really want to reinforce our hope to live in a secure and stable world, we really don't have any other choice, because an isolated and aggressive Russia is more dangerous, much more dangerous for itself and the world than a Russia that has been integrated into the world community. This requires open and transparent policies, not only for Russia itself, but for the countries of the world.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SMITH. Mr. Kovalev, thank you very much for your excellent testimony.

I'd like to invite Ambassador Matlock to make his presentation at this point.

STATEMENT OF JACK F. MATLOCK, FORMER U.S. AMBASSADOR TO THE SOVIET UNION

Amb. MATLOCK. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. It is an honor to appear before this Committee, and in particular to share the platform with Sergei Kovalev and Anatol Lieven, both of whom are better informed about current conditions in Chechnya than I am. As I wrote a year ago, Sergei Kovalev is one of the few heroes emerging from the tragedy of the war in Chechnya. His actions in documenting the atrocities that have been committed have played a key role in alerting his own countrymen and the world public as a whole to the situation there. One would despair for the prospects of creating a democracy in Russia were it not for people like Sergei Kovalev working within that society. Among the journalists reporting on developments in what was once the Soviet Union none have reported with greater depth and understanding than Anatol Lieven. So it is a privilege to join them here at this table.

The war in Chechnya continues without an end in sight. At times, President Yeltsin has seemed to understand the importance of ending the conflict, but more frequently his decisions have prolonged it. We can hope that the desire to improve his standings before the Presidential election in June will give President Yeltsin the strong motivation to stop the fighting, but we yet see little concrete evidence that this will happen.

Meanwhile, the damage to Russia mounts. The bungled attempt to subdue Chechnya has laid bare the weakness of the Russian armed forces, just as earlier the failure to deal with the problem by administrative means revealed a weakness and indeed corruption of the Russian administrative and law enforcement bodies. It is a tragic conflict in which there can be and will be no winners. All friends of Russia should appeal to the Russian authorities to end this senseless conflict, not only because it is an affront to humanity, but also because it is damaging to Russia itself.

As we condemn the methods used to deal with the Chechen rebellion, however, we should be careful not to idealize or condone those Chechen leaders who created the conditions that precipitated the Russian military intervention. We should recognize that the Russian authorities confronted an armed rebellion, not a peaceful effort to achieve national autonomy or independence. Dzhokar Dudayev and his associates seized power in 1991 by a military coup d'etat and never allowed an unfettered vote in what was then Chechen-Ingushetia. No self-respecting government could allow such a situation to persist within its borders without efforts to bring it to an end. The Russian Government obviously chose the wrong method in December 1994 when it mounted a full-scale military invasion, but this should not obscure the shared responsibility of Chechnya's breakaway regime that chose from the outset to use military force rather than the tools of democracy to achieve its political goals.

In short, the invasion of Chechnya is not comparable to the Chinese slaughter of peaceful demonstrators in Tiananmen Square, and the Chechen rebellion is not comparable to the peaceful democratic movements in the Baltic states, which sought—ultimately successfully—to free their countries from Soviet rule. Brutality and guilt are not the exclusive possessions of one side in this tragic conflict.

That makes it particularly difficult for foreign governments to deal with the issue. I certainly agree with Sergei Kovalev when he said this is a complex issue, not one that is easy to determine just what is the right amount of pressure and what the right doses are. In one sense, the Russian Government has a right to suppress armed rebellion within its borders, and few governments would wish to challenge this principle. Nevertheless, in another sense the methods used have violated solemn commitments undertaken by the Russian Government, in the Helsinki Final Act, in particular. But these are political commitments which do not have the force of law or treaties. I need not remind this Commission that the U.S. Government has never wished to give them the force of law or treaties, because of our own constitutional system.

Now some Americans argue that the U.S. Government should do more overtly to put Russia under pressure to end the war in

Chechnya, by such steps as curtailing economic and political cooperation with Russia as long as the war persists. In my judgment, such steps would not be wise. They would be most unlikely to shorten the war, but would entail a serious political cost and in my judgment a cost to the cause of democratization in Russia. If aid projects are meeting their goals, they should be continued, because the proper goals are to strengthen the forces of democracy within the country. Both the U.S. and Russia stand to benefit, and these projects should not be turned on and off for extraneous reasons, not matter how important. Political sanctions are even more inappropriate since they reinforce the false image many Russian "superpatriots" have of the United States as an enemy power. There is no rational reason for Russia and the United States to be enemies. In fact, I think our basic interests are very similar and run in parallel and are not in conflict. However, we should be careful not to strengthen the hand of chauvinist forces in Russia by appearing to desire dismemberment of the country.

Does this mean that we have no means of pressure, that we should stand by and do nothing? Certainly not. Our official representatives should make a consistent effort in their private dialog with the Russian Government to press for an end to the war and for more regard for the human rights of Russian citizens in the area. Private pressure can often be more important than public pressure. I myself was a party to bringing enormous private pressure on Gorbachev in 1990 and '91 not to authorize the use of force in the Baltic states. That was successful. Whatever pressures we have been able to bring to bear on the Russian Government today unfortunately have not been successful. But I can testify that private pressure can have results, and it is very appropriate in a circumstance such as the one we face now.

This is also an issue in which public organizations, like Helsinki Watch, and other unofficial non-governmental human rights organizations have a very important role to play. They should bring to light atrocities when they occur. The only comment I would make on that is that they should be evenhanded about it. It is just as much an atrocity to kill and kidnap innocent civilians by acts of terrorism as it is to bombard defenseless cities, though more people may die from the latter. Such tactics should not and must not be condoned anywhere and for any reason.

We should also urge the Russian Government to expand the role of the OSCE representatives in mediating the conflict, and if those representatives indeed have shown cowardice and lack of judgment in their previous actions, I think that we should press the OSCE to change them. I think there is a real role here to play, and I think that we should press hard for a more active OSCE role in mediating the conflict. The representatives of the OSCE can set a very useful precedent for peacemaking if they can secure the cooperation of both sides to the conflict. But I would simply add here that I think pressure should be brought on Dudayev and the people around him to drop what is clearly a position that is unacceptable to the Russian Government, that is that the independence of Chechnya be recognized before there can be any negotiations. I think this sort of demand under existing conditions would be nonnegotiable with any government I can think of.

So we should bring pressure to bear not only on the Russian Government, but also on the other side.

Ultimately, it is Russia herself that is most damaged by the conflict, and the Russian political leadership should have no higher priority than bringing it to an end. We can best show our friendship for the development of a democratic Russia by impressing this truth upon the Russian authorities.

Thank you very much.

Mr. SMITH. Mr. Ambassador, thank you for your testimony.

Mr. Lieven.

STATEMENT OF ANATOL LIEVEN, SENIOR FELLOW AT THE U.S. INSTITUTE OF PEACE

Mr. LIEVEN. Thank you, sir. I'd like to say what an honor it is to appear alongside Dr. Kovalev, one of the great defenders of human rights and democratic values in Russia, and alongside Ambassador Matlock. I should also like to pay tribute to my colleague, Yelena Masiuk of Russian Independent Television, who is with us here. She is one of those Russian journalists who by their courageous and dedicated reporting in Chechnya have helped to pierce through the screen of Russian Government disinformation about that conflict at considerable risk to their own lives.

I shall depart somewhat from my prepared statement, so as not simply to repeat what Dr. Kovalev and Mr. Matlock have said.

The prospects for peace in Chechnya do indeed now look grim. Last year's truce brokered by the OSCE has definitely broken down. To judge by what I saw and heard during my last visit to Chechnya in December, there is little reason for optimism about the chances of future cease-fires, at least as long as the present leaders of Russia and Chechnya remain in office.

The Yeltsin administration, as Dr. Kovalev said, is urging the OSCE to recognize the legitimacy of its government in Chechnya, the government of Doku Zavgayev; but this government is clearly opposed by the great majority of Chechens and Mr. Zavgayev's so-called election in December was, indeed, a farce. The Russian Government has, in fact, signed an agreement with Mr. Zavgayev, promising Chechnya very wide autonomy, but the separatist forces under President Dzhokar Dudayev continue to insist on full independence and refuse any contacts whatsoever with the Russian-backed Chechen authorities. President Yeltsin's promises of a new peace formula appear wholly insincere, and it does seem that his statement tomorrow is likely to consist mainly of a promise of further military measures against the Dudayev forces.

I won't go into detail about the latest military moves. The Chechen independence forces have greatly intensified their attacks on the Russians in recent weeks. The Russians have greatly intensified their bombardments of towns and villages thought to harbor Chechen fighters. Casualties among civilians have been extremely high, according to my colleagues down there. There can be little doubt that a continued intensification of the fighting will lead to further human rights abuses by Russian troops. They could also, of course, very well add to further terrorist attacks by the Chechen forces both in Russia and possibly in the outside world.

Last year's truce failed for two reasons, which I fear will operate in the future as well. The first is that, as Mr. Matlock said, at bottom there is nothing to talk about. Mr. Dudayev's demand for full independence and the prior withdrawal of all Russian troops is unacceptable to the Yeltsin government and probably to any other Russian administration. Now, under a different Russian leadership, and perhaps a Chechen one, some sort of face-saving formula might indeed be found; but the Yeltsin government has now invested massive political capital in its own Chechen allies and in the fight against Dudayev. Real compromise with the separatists will be probably a fatal humiliation for Yeltsin.

As for Mr. Dudayev, he lacks the diplomatic skill, in my view, to negotiate a compromise, and he also probably does not have sufficient authority over his own forces to get them to accept any deals short of full independence. Now, while Dudayev does have undeniable authority in Chechnya, it is not necessarily true that he enjoys the support of a majority of Chechens. I found him unpopular even among some of his own fighters. But there is no way that these fighters or their commanders are going to get rid of their president at Russia's behest. For example, this is true of the leading Chechen military commander, General Aslan Maskhadov. He is widely seen as a more rational and responsible figure than Dudayev, and there is evidence of differences between him and the president. But General Maskhadov, like the other leading Chechen commanders, is also a passionately committed Chechen nationalist, and he has rejected all the Russian attempts to drive a wedge between him and President Dudayev and get him to sign a separate peace. What you often hear Chechen fighters saying is "I'm not fighting for Dudayev, but for Chechnya, and I will fight on until I am dead or Chechnya is independent." That's pretty much Maskhadov's position as well.

The only significant neutral political figure left in Chechnya is the former Russian parliamentary chairman, and of course arch-Yeltsin rival, Ruslan Khasbulatov. He still does seem to have considerable support among ordinary Chechens, many of whom are desperate for peace. But for obvious reasons the Yeltsin administration has sidelined him. He's also detested by Dudayev and the pro-independence forces, so that even if some post-Yeltsin government were to try to use him as an intermediary, his chances of bringing about peace appears slight.

Nevertheless, perhaps the prospects for at least a pragmatic cease-fire do exist. Last year, General Maskhadov does seem sincerely to have tried to get the truce then to stick. That was also true of his Russian counterpart, General Anatoly Romanov. The problem is that neither of them fully controlled the forces on their respective sides. The Chechen independence fighters are obviously very loosely structured, and as long as there are Russian troops in Chechnya to attack, they will go on attacking them, whatever their orders from above are. That's exactly what happened last year.

On the Russian side, apart from the differences between the hawks who now surround Yeltsin and more dovish or reasonable figures in Moscow, there are local Chechen allies, not necessarily politically very significant, but very well armed and very rich, whose own political or even physical survival depends on their pre-

venting any agreement between Dudayev and Moscow. In November of last year, General Romanov was critically injured by a car bomb in Grozny, which also finally killed off the cease-fire. The Russian Government, of course, blamed the Dudayev forces, but I have heard a widespread suspicion, even on the Russian side, that the real perpetrators may have been pro-Russian Chechens determined to wreck any peace process.

Now, despite the latest evidence of the war spreading, the fighting in Chechnya has not yet led to a general anti-Russian revolt in the Caucasus, and it seems to me unlikely to do so for two reasons. The first is that the Chechens are actually not very popular in the North Caucasus region, because they often behave rather arrogantly toward their fellow Caucasians. You may say that in view of their achievements that is understandable. The fact is it does not make them very much liked. Their attitude toward their fellow Caucasians was indeed demonstrated during the raid into Daghestan when they took numerous Daghestani hostages. The second reason is that while Russians are indeed generally loathed in the North Caucasus, every North Caucasian republic, except Chechnya, also has deep internal ethnic divisions and anti-Russian revolt would therefore be likely to lead to a whole series of civil wars.

Nor has the fighting in Chechnya so far affected relations between Russia and other Russian autonomous republics, like Tatarstan, Bashkortostan, and Yakutia, except insofar as it has clearly led to a diminution of the authority of the Russian central government. As the last Russian parliamentary elections showed, these republics now occupy very strong and rather stable places in the Russian polity, and their ruling groups are being wooed both by the Russian Government and the Russian opposition.

As Mr. Matlock said, in a historical perspective, the most striking thing about the Chechen war may be just how weak and incompetent it has shown the Russian army today to be. Although the Russian army has displayed intense brutality, I do not think the Russian army today can be viewed as much of a threat to the outside world. Partly because the Russian public, although it has been very passive in the face of the war in Chechnya, has also clearly not supported it. This is a very unpopular war in Russia.

There is a danger, however, that Russian attitudes toward this war, and toward the Chechens, could be radicalized. If the Chechen independence forces, which carry out really bloody terrorist attacks in Moscow and elsewhere in the heart of Russia, this might lead to the deportation of the Chechen community from Moscow, something that the Russian security forces have reportedly privately threatened. Perhaps pogroms against Chechens and even Caucasians in general. It could also lead to much greater Russian military ruthlessness within Chechnya. Despite the great brutality which has occurred, Russian behavior in Chechnya has at least partly been modified by a Russian desire to keep some Chechen allies. If you got an upsurge of Russian racial feeling against Chechens in general, then all borders could go down.

There is some hope that these terrorist attacks will not take place. I interviewed the Chechen military commander, Shamil Basayev, in December, and although he said he thought such at-

tacks would be justified, morally justified—after all, his own family was largely wiped out in a Russian bombing attack—he didn't actually say that he would carry them out. I also saw evidence of a pragmatic and careful moderation in that regard among the Chechen commanders. Mr. Basayev, for example, is reported to have disapproved of the latest raid into Daghestan. Nonetheless, in the coming months there will obviously be a great temptation for the Chechens to use this weapon to weaken Yeltsin in the run-up to the Russian elections.

In view of all these threats, the West clearly has an interest and duty in trying to bring about a cease-fire, and therefore in trying to avoid these dangers. The West, through the OSCE, must also try to put pressure on the Russians to limit the nature of their attacks in Chechnya and to follow up human rights abuses such as the arrest and subsequent disappearance of Chechen civilians. Under the new OSCE leadership of Switzerland, it is possible that the OSCE will, in fact, do this. The Swiss have said that they have an interest in this. Last year the OSCE was limited in that regard by its design not to offend the Russians and to bring about negotiations. I think the West should give full support to the Swiss and to the OSCE in putting pressure on the Russians in this regard.

As far as peace negotiations are concerned, it is very difficult. The Russians insist on the impossible condition of the recognition of their Chechen administration, while General Dudayev, when I met him in December, expressed himself in the most contemptuous and hostile terms about the OSCE, the United Nations and indeed the West in general. It is difficult therefore to see that either side has a serious interest in Western mediation.

In conclusion, I would like to say that I am very sorry not to be able to give a more hopeful picture or more positive advice. I myself believe that the tremendous courage and tenacity demonstrated by the Chechen separatist forces will, in fact, sooner or later achieve independence for Chechnya, given the underlying lack of will demonstrated by the Russian side. I also believe that this independence is justified in terms of Chechen history. What I fear is that this independence is likely to come only through further and greater bloodshed.

Thank you.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you, Mr. Lieven, for your very sobering assessment. I will now recognize the distinguished gentleman from Maryland, Commissioner Ben Cardin.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

Mr. CARDIN. Well, let me apologize for being late. This hearing is extremely important. We have not had enough debate here in Washington on what you are bringing to our attention. Your testimony is extremely important to this Commission. I look forward to reading the testimonies of those that I missed and analyzing the information to see what is an appropriate role for the U.S. Congress and our government here in trying to move forward the solution to the atrocities that have taken place. Hopefully, our Commission will hold a dialog to find an appropriate role for our work. Congress and the administration should work together, playing a constructive role in bringing the parties together and working for

a solution that will stop the human rights problems and establish a workable circumstance. So with that in mind, I look forward to that work.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much, Mr. Cardin. Maybe that would be a good transition to what might be a good first question. Ambassador Matlock, you might want to begin by focusing on what the U.S. Government should be doing. We all know that Vice President Gore has a very close relationship with Mr. Chernomyrdin. I, for one, have been very critical of the administration particularly in the early days believing that they had given, however unwittingly, a green light to the atrocities committed in Chechnya; and we heard from others, including Yelena Bonner, and Mr. Kovalev who seemed to echo that there was no penalty at all, particularly in the first month of the invasion, from the U.S. Government. Even one of our own at the State Department said this is analogous to our own civil war and said it is an "internal affair," which meant to Yeltsin and anyone else involved that there would be no penalty. Perhaps you would want to touch on that and what we ought to be doing as a government to try to mitigate this problem.

Amb. MATLOCK. Well, obviously this subject should be one at the top of any agenda for political talks. I think that most of the pressure and persuasion we try to bring to bear should be in private, because I believe there are real dangers in appearing to set double standards. After all, when we are faced with armed rebellion, we do insist that we have the right to put it down. Fortunately, recent rebellions have been of much smaller magnitude and one can argue with much less reason. Now, we may criticize the wrong methods or say excessive force was used. Nevertheless, we would not look very kindly at foreign governments trying to bring pressure to bear, particularly publicly, when we are compelled to use force in our country.

I think particularly given the current state of disarray in Russian politics, all the forces that Dr. Kovalev has pointed to in his testimony make this a particularly delicate time to be seen making what many Russians would consider an overt attempt to break up their country. We should recognize that the Russian Government was faced with a dilemma and a very serious dilemma. The leaders of the rebellion in Chechnya were not people who conducted elections, fair elections, got themselves elected and were going after independence in a constitutional way at a time when their voices might have been heard. Certainly they could have gotten complete autonomy, as many other republics have been able to in Russia, had they followed the right method. But they didn't.

Where was the world community in '91 in condemning what Dzhokar Dudayev and a few others did in besieging Russian military bases, in taking arms? Actually what he did was very similar, in fact, to what the legislature in South Carolina did in regard to Fort Sumter in 1861, with the one difference that the South Carolina legislature was an elected legislature. Dudayev simply gathered arms, took his fighters in, seized the capital, and then carried out fake elections where in most cases the evidence is that the ballot boxes were not even opened so people could vote, and then claimed to have been elected.

This was at a time where the Russian Government and the Soviet Government were pressing for free elections, which he refused to permit.

Faced with this I think it was very hard for our government at the outset to say that the Russian attempt to subdue the rebellion was wrong. As the war became more brutal, violations of human rights multiplied. What should logically have been a surgical police action, of it had to come to that, became an all-out war and like most all-out wars full of atrocities. By now, many more people have suffered from the atrocities committed by Russian forces than by the Chechens. That is absolutely clear.

Nevertheless, we should recognize that the pressure we should bring to bear must be graduated and designed to be maximally effective. Simply confronting the Government of Russia at every point publicly will probably not bring the results we want. More can be achieved privately.

Now, this does not mean that other people should remain silent. This does not mean that this Commission should not make some strong public statements about its judgment, though I would hope that these would be evenhanded and recognize that the Russian Government was faced with an extreme provocation in this instance. Therefore they had no easy solutions, given the weakness of their administrative apparatus.

We also should not forget the past actions of the Dudayev group. They went outside Chechnya. They invaded Abkhazia. They, through their actions, contributed to a situation where there are nearly 200,000 refugees from Abkhazia in the republic of Georgia today, and that situation has not been corrected. Now, in doing so they had the cooperation of some local Russian forces. This was hardly a matter of simply fighting for national liberation. They have been a problem in the area, and I think we have to recognize that without in any way excusing the atrocities that the Russian Government has done. But we do have to recognize that the Russians had a problem and a responsibility to deal with it. They should have dealt with it in a different way. They did not.

But the main thing that I want to get across here is in dealing with it, we should not assume that this is a conflict of Russian-American interests. It is in Russia's own interest to solve this peacefully. I think it is immaterial in the long run to Russia's interest whether Chechnya is technically independent or not. But I do think that any Russian Government is going to refuse to accept the independence of Chechnya, brought about solely by force of arms, particularly since there is no proof that the majority of Chechens have ever freely chosen that, much less the other non-Chechens in the area who also have rights. Now these rights, of course, have been seriously damaged by the Russian actions. The Russians may have killed more Russians and non-Chechens than they have Chechens because often the Chechens could leave the cities before they were bombed and take refuge whereas the Russians and the others had no place to go. So ironically the damage has been great to everyone in that area. The tragic war in Chechnya presents the U.S. Government with a dilemma also in dealing with it officially and publicly. In communicating with the Russian Government, our approach should be that Chechnya is a

serious problem for all of us, but particularly damaging to Russia. We want to do what we can in a constructive way to help Russia get out of this dilemma. If we follow that attitude I think we will have more influence than simply criticizing everything that happens publicly, and particularly I think it would be dangerous to use other elements in the relationship as levers. That would be my judgment.

Mr. SMITH. You, I am sure, have seen the many statements that Mr. Hoyer, Mr. D'Amato, the co-chair, and I, and other members of the Commission——

Amb. MATLOCK. Yes.

Mr. SMITH. [continuing] have made. We have been balanced, but we have also been extremely critical of the means, believing that the means do not justify the ends.

Amb. MATLOCK. I think quite properly so, quite properly so.

Mr. SMITH. There were warnings given before the December invasion that seasoned hands might have picked up as, hey, this is something that has to be squelched before it becomes an all-out conflict, which unfortunately it became. Many of us have been concerned and have raised questions about Mr. Yeltsin's seeming inability to use economic and particularly diplomatic means to try to resolve this. They went right back to form, using brute force and excessive brutality to try to bring the Chechens to submission. No one is here to defend Dudayev. Our thought is to say, look at all these innocents killed, as you pointed out yourself.

Amb. MATLOCK. Yes.

Mr. SMITH. [continuing] Now the concern remains with Bosnia. In a sense, the reason that, in my view, Bosnia has finally lent itself to a diplomatic solution is that, one, a greater Serbia has been established; two, the Croats and the Bosnians, but especially the Croats, showed a capability of using force, despite the embargo, to make the diplomacy work. Suddenly the Bosnian Serbs knew that there was a counter-force, so now it is time to negotiate. Three, they were spent. Bosnian Serbs had so engaged to the point where there was little else to be done. Our great concern is that in Chechnya this will grind on until more thousands of people are dead. There's no sense of urgency within our own administration to take initiative on this either publicly or even privately. There's no evidence that I see of this being very strongly prosecuted on a private, diplomatic channel, saying that's enough; the crisis has to be solved.

Amb. MATLOCK. Well, I would strongly urge the administration to pursue it very vigorously privately.

Mr. SMITH. I will be happy to yield to my good friend.

Mr. CARDIN. I appreciate the Chairman's yielding.

Mr. Ambassador, I appreciate your very frank views on how we can be effective in trying to influence what is happening in Russian politics. You have shown your great skills and your response to the Chairman's question.

One of the things that is obvious from what has been mentioned is that whatever solution or whatever plan we come up with must be deeply steeped in the politics of what is happening in Russia. One thing I have learned since I have been in Congress is that many times, we are not good judges of what is happening in local

politics. For example, what the papers think would be important to us or what we think would be important to Russian politics, in fact, is not, and Russia's view of what is important in U.S. politics is not always correct.

I'm wondering whether you could give us an assessment of how important this conflict is in Russian politics today. Regarding the approaching elections in Russia, does Mr. Yeltsin need to show some movement in order to be successful politically? How important is this conflict on the radar screen or is this just one of many issues that are confronting the Russian voter?

Amb. MATLOCK. I think my colleagues here at the table would have a better sense of that than I. I would just say in general I have been surprised at how passive the Russian population has been on this issue. Of course for a long time they seemed relatively passive regarding Afghanistan. It turned out they were not nearly so passive in the final analysis when they could express their views. But I think for most Russians probably there are mixed emotions, and there are other issues. Chechens are not popular with Russians because unfortunately some Chechens have been notoriously involved in brutal crime and so on, and so that means that on the one hand if there could be a quick military victory, that would probably be very popular. Obviously this has not happened. As it drags on, it is one of Yeltsin's disabilities.

But for most Russians probably their economic situation is going to affect their vote more. Whether or not Yeltsin can restore enough of his credibility to place in one of the two top positions in the first ballot, which would give him a chance in the run-off, I could not predict. Certainly the continuation of the war in Chechnya does not help. He himself has said he cannot be elected unless it is solved. But as others have indicated, his ideal solution seems to be applying more military force, hoping that he would have a clean-cut military victory. I don't think that's going to happen.

Mr. CARDIN. Thank you.

Mr. SMITH. Would either of you gentlemen care to answer that?

Mr. CARDIN. What is the political impact of a potential solution to the conflict on the coming elections?

Mr. LIEVEN. Well, the Russian population has accepted the war in Chechnya as it tends passively to accept most things. It's true there has been a shift in feeling. Initially, I think, public feeling was strongly against the war. Above all, through some of the Chechen terrorist attacks, this has led to a more anti-Chechen feeling, perhaps a stronger support for the Yeltsin government policies. But I do not think there is any question but that the handling of the war in Chechnya has diminished Yeltsin's popularity.

Mr. CARDIN. How would Russians view outside influences, such as the West, playing a role in the resolution of this conflict?

Mr. LIEVEN. You know, to be honest, Russians at the moment, and I mean even Russian liberal public opinion, what's left of it, let alone the masses, are not very receptive to Western influence. There is a pretty strong anti-Western feeling in Russia today. I am afraid that what Ambassador Matlock said about a perhaps hostile response from the Russian Government against public Western influence might also be the reaction of some of Russian public opin-

ion. I can see, you know, even some liberal Russian newspapers perhaps, you know, going in for a lot of language about double standards if they were able to portray the West as supporting an Islamic terrorist movement against Russia, you can imagine how that would play in Moscow. It might be totally unfair, but that is how it would be presented, I am afraid. So I am also not very optimistic about the opportunities for Western influence.

What I would say on the other hand is that this whole business plays out for the Yeltsin administration, one thing I think which is clearly going to be strengthened by Chechnya is a great Russian public distaste for military adventures and military operations. That was already apparent in public attitudes to Afghanistan. It was apparent in opinion polls about Tajikistan. I am sure it is going to be true in the future. They are going to be very unwilling to get involved in more shambles like this one.

Mr. CARDIN. Thank you. It is useful.

Mr. SMITH. Mr. Kovalev, would you like to respond, too?

Mr. KOVALEV. [Through interpreter] There's a lot of myths that are growing by leaps and bounds with regard to politics, policies and circumstances in Russia today. But on the other hand, the world is constructed rather simply. One should assume that if there are in Russia anti-Western attitudes, which do exist, these anti-Western attitudes, and I would point out particularly that they have recently been rather carefully cultivated, not only by the aggressive nationalists and the Communists, but even by the government that's in power now.

One should not think that this is just a reaction to Western pressure, Western opposition or Western non-acceptance of Russia. This is just a return to the old ideology that has been around for a long time in the Soviet Union. This ideology has been around in the Soviet Union from around the 1930's when this ideology replaced the ideology of classical communism. Don't you remember back in the '20s and the early '30s the Communists proudly called themselves cosmopolitans? You remember that after the war, however, there began the campaign against the cosmopolitans. Russia became the homeland of elephants.

Amb. MATLOCK. This does not have the political connotations in Russia that it does here.

Mr. KOVALEV. [Through interpreter] This ideology actually used Communist slogans as just a camouflage, as a facade. Now this ideology is growing strongly in Russia, and this is not a reaction against Western pressure. Really, the West should not be so smug as to assume that it has that much to do with events in Russia. But the slogans here are no longer the slogans of communism now, but slogans against the rights of the individual and of freedom. Using these, it is actually pretty easy to stir up aggression or aggressive attitudes within people and politicians who themselves are already inclined in this direction.

But there is a fairly stable and not-so-small portion of the population that clearly is inclined toward progressive, democratic, actually pro-Western feelings. In fact, the schism in the population now is so deep and so clear that to really change these numbers numerically from the outside is not possible. These folks are like they are, and their positions are clearly defined.

Of course, another problem is that the democrats are themselves split. They are not united. The question then for the West is whom to support and on whom to exert pressure.

There is another way that the world is built simply. We heard, for instance, references to Abkhazia and Central Asia. Yes, in fact, Basayev was a combatant in Abkhazia. It is a long story to really say how he wound up there and whose side he was on. But why don't we look on what the position of the Federal Government is in Abkhazia and the position of the Federal Government in Tajikistan.

The Federal Government is supporting the same positions in Abkhazia, in Central Asia, and in Bosnia, as a result of this resurrected ideology, to which I referred earlier. Just not to go into a long story, we always support the bums. I understand that is a simplified picture of the world around Moscow, but I think it is really sufficient. Of course, we know that the West also has a rather historical experience of appeasing aggressors. Again, the West will find itself in a dangerous position of those who turned out to be the victims of criminals when they tried to appease them.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you. Mr. Kovalev, last week I heard testimony on the rising tide of anti-semitism, as I chair the International Operations and Human Rights Committee. We had an extensive series of witnesses talk about the rising tide in Russia and elsewhere. One witness was Alla Gerber, one of your colleagues in the Duma. She made a very strong appeal that democrats in Russia ought to unite behind Boris Yeltsin as the best and last hope of defeating the Communists. Now, you have testified that, and said that the pro-democracy electorate outnumbers the repressive forces in Russia, and you pointed out again just a moment ago that they are split. They are not united behind any single candidate. If not Yeltsin, who? Is there a candidate who truly believes in democracy? Is there somebody on the horizon, perhaps, around which the people could rally?

Mr. KOVALEV. [Through interpreter] Difficult question. There is at the moment, there is really only one candidate with any sort of claim to being the candidate about which the democrats could unite, and that is Mr. Yavlinsky.

With regard to President Yeltsin, and perhaps within a certain number of the electorate a quick or early victory in Chechnya would raise him higher than his present ratings in popularity. But remember that his chances would be raised particularly in that element of the population that prefers that the police do not go after criminals, but go after dark-skinned people. Democrats would go vote for Yeltsin with a feeling of shame and only to keep Zyuganov from winning.

But actually neither a quick nor a slow victory in Chechnya will take place. This is clear to any unbiased expert. Only Mr. Lobov, Yeltsin's expert on this, can say something like, "Oh there won't be any partisan war in Chechens because they're not used to that kind of thing; it's not part of their nature." I guess you can't make every politician just read an elementary school primer.

There won't be any military victory in Chechnya. Yeltsin is again making his latest catastrophic mistake. His chances are very small. His only chance, his really best chance is that there are many peo-

ple in Russia who do not want Zyuganov. Unfortunately, Mr. Yavlinsky is young. He is rather weak. He doesn't come off as an expression of a male character.

But on the other hand we should not think that he has no chance of winning, because there are serious people in our ranks of democrats who are capable of counting. But remember before the campaign you have to not only count your chances, but you also have to make your chances. If the democrats do get their act together and unite, and if they carry on a decent campaign, actually the chances of Yavlinsky going over the barrier and becoming one of the two candidates for the second round are not really that bad. Even if you look at the results of the December elections, probably about 15 or 16 percent Yavlinsky could pick up. But if he does get into the final two, his chances go up considerably, very greatly. For instance, if it's Yavlinsky versus Yeltsin, Yavlinsky's got it. It would be a little bit more difficult with Mr. Zyuganov.

Mr. SMITH. Mr. Lieven, in your statement you maintain that now there is nothing to talk about since Russia is determined to maintain its territorial integrity while General Dudayev demands full independence. You also mentioned that the General is contemptuous and hostile toward the OSCE and Western diplomacy.

In December of last year, Mr. Kovalev was quoted in the German press as saying that the OSCE mission in Chechnya was guilty of criminal cowardice when it left Chechnya rather than dealing with the so-called elections in Chechnya in December 1995.

The mission has also been criticized by Chechen representatives for its alleged lack of diligence in investigating human rights abuses.

The bottom line: What is the role of the OSCE in Chechnya?

Mr. LIEVEN. Well, I think it is true, as I mentioned, that under Hungarian leadership, the OSCE did not press hard last year on the question of human rights abuses. That was because the Hungarians were concentrating absolutely on trying to bring about a cease-fire—and ultimately a peace settlement, and for a while they did play a major and very positive role in bringing about a cease-fire. So they played down the human rights abuse angle because they were anxious not to offend the Russians. Whether that was the right thing to do, I myself wouldn't like to say. They obviously thought they were aiming for the greater good.

The collapse of the cease-fire left the OSCE, when I saw them in December, extremely demoralized. Frankly, they did not know what to do. They were also very unfortunate in the loss of their Hungarian chief in a car accident—he was injured—and the replacement by a man who was very much criticized, and his personal relations with Dudayev became absolutely terrible.

What they should have done about the elections I do not know. Probably they could and should have condemned them more openly. Not just gone away, because it's true that especially among the Chechens, the Chechens do not much respect people who retreat, who go away in a circumstance like that.

As far as the whole OSCE role is concerned, though, what makes it very difficult for them and basically what has led to this great hostility and contempt from Dudayev and his supporters, is that of course the OSCE is bound to operate within its charter and rules,

which of course recognize Russian territorial integrity within Russia's existing borders, which most unfortunately but, you know, as signed by the OSCE, include Chechnya. The OSCE is also, of course, committed only to approve the revision of borders by mutual agreement. That, of course, makes their freedom of maneuver very slight. It's impossible for them in principle to approve of Dudayev's position, even if there wasn't the clear risk that if they were to take a pro-independence position, the Russian Government would simply have nothing more to say to them and would indeed expel them.

That's why I'm not optimistic about the OSCE's role in bringing about a general peace settlement and agreement, at least as long as Yeltsin remains in power, and perhaps as long as Dudayev remains in power as well.

What I do think they may be able to do, if only as you indicated, sir, through the mutual exhaustion of both sides at some stage, is bring about another pragmatic cease-fire. I think we should back them in trying to do that.

I also think, as I indicated in my statement, that they can play a positive role in trying to put a limit on human rights abuses by the Russian forces. There is some room for maneuver there. They can play, as I indicated, on Russia's desire to keep at least a facade of having some Chechen allies.

Mr. SMITH. Mr. Kovalev? And Ambassador Matlock, if you'd like to respond to that as well.

Amb. MATLOCK. Well, no, I think I've already addressed what little I know about the issue. Fundamentally, I think at this point the outcome of the Russian election is unpredictable and that probably Chechnya is not going to be the issue uppermost in the mind of most Russian voters. However, I do think that the continuation of the war there is no benefit to Yeltsin, and he has a long way to go before he is going to be a truly credible candidate. It is conceivable he can win. But I do not think he could win today. Of course the war in Chechnya is one of the factors that does tend to weigh him down, though it does not have the force in Russian public opinion as a whole as some other issues, at least in my judgment.

Mr. KOVALEV. [Through interpreter] With regard to OSCE or even perhaps more so to the Council of Europe, I think actually that the role of these organizations could actually be the defining point for resolving this crisis and defining the future of Russia. I think you can't overestimate the role of OSCE and the Council of Europe. Why did I first just mention the recent entry of Russia into the Council of Europe? For instance, it was not really that difficult to insist upon a list of criteria entered by the Council of Europe for Russian entry into the Council. The list was full. It was concrete and it had the necessary details.

Now, for this list of criteria for Russian entry into the Council of Europe and to see that it is fulfilled by Russia, there is only one thing missing. The only thing that now leaves to be done is you have to have the determination of the Council of Europe to monitor this list and to monitor Russia's implementation of this list of criteria upon which it was accepted into the Council. This determination is something absolutely necessary for the West. I don't have in mind only pressure on my country. This could also be consult-

ative. This could be material help, and this could be well-meaning criticism. The important thing is here that a Russian backing-away or an obvious backing-away from this list of criteria—any sort of backing away should be followed up closely and Europe must not forget this.

But you also have to remember that many of our problems cannot be simply taken care of in a few months. They will demand much time. Therefore the Council of Europe was faced with the fact that, yes, you had to monitor these situations closely, but some of these situations, like, for instance, our penitentiary system, will take at least 5 years to straighten that out.

I should say that actually I am getting a little bit tired of coming and being a type of defender of Dudayev. I do not like Dudayev any more than the Ambassador does. But you still have to remember that not so long ago the still fragile peace in the Middle East was actually achieved by negotiations with terrorists, and one of them even won the Nobel Peace Prize. That is the way the world is. Let me assure you that Dudayev is no worse than Yasser Arafat. But the price of punishing Dudayev, as I see it, is at least 45,000 innocent people, and I think that is high.

I should also say that there are many myths going on around the career of Dudayev. If you compare the legitimacy of, say, Zavgayev, the one who was elected December 17th, and Dudayev, I would say that Dudayev is at least 10 times more legitimately in power. Dudayev did not get his weapons so much by stealing it, but they were actually given to him as gifts.

Mr. CARDIN. You may have noticed that the Chairman has left because of the vote that is on the House floor. He will be back very promptly so we are going to try to continue the hearing. When the next bells ring, we will probably take a very brief recess until the Chairman has returned to the Chair and I will leave to vote, and would ask if you could remain in your seats, because we would like to conclude the hearing as quickly as possible, understanding the schedules of the people that are here.

Let me just make an observation, and that is it is difficult for us to predict the internal politics of Russia or what impact our actions will have in Russia. But we do know that OSCE and the Council of Europe can play a very critical role in this matter, particularly now that Bosnia is somewhat off the immediate radar screen as far as a crisis area needing a lot of attention. We should determine what member states want to work with us, using the OSCE and the Council of Europe in a constructive way to bring about a solution in this area. In an informal way, Mr. Ambassador, we should strategize as to what states may be interested in working with us, using the OSCE and the Council of Europe in a much more constructive way to bring about some solution in this area.

Amb. MATLOCK. Yes, let me say that I think that Dr. Kovalev's comments on the way the Council of Europe can be used were right on target. I think that is something that we should try to impress upon our allies in the Council of Europe. It is important to keep these criteria under constant review and to keep the pressure on the Russian Government.

I totally agree with him that, though final decisions are not going to be made by foreigners, the influence of international organiza-

tions such as the OSCE, such as the Council of Europe, can be enormous when it's used in the right way. I think that monitoring conditions that have been set forth is the right way.

Mr. SMITH. With your patience we are going to take a very brief recess.

Mr. LIEVEN. Excuse me, sir. I am afraid I shall have to leave fairly soon——

Mr. SMITH. Certainly.

Mr. LIEVEN [continuing] Because I have a talk. I just wanted to say, perhaps in conclusion, to follow up the point about Russian internal politics, I do think it would be a mistake to attach too much hope to the prospects of the democratic parties in Russia. Most unfortunately, their electoral achievements do not seem to justify that. They have not called out the votes. Therefore I think one must be aware, which of course is a tragic fact to have to recognize, that probably the vote in June will be between Yeltsin and the Communists, and therefore that one is facing a choice of evils.

Mr. SMITH. I appreciate that observation. Certainly we understand your schedule and appreciate your testimony. The Committee will be in short recess.

[Whereupon the committee took a short recess.]

Mr. SMITH. The Commission will now come back to order. Mr. Kovalev and Ambassador Matlock, with the attitudes of the Russian society seemingly so against the war in Chechnya, why has popular disapproval of the war not moved President Yeltsin to change his hard-line policy? What is it that is causing him to stay so fixed on the military solution? Mr. Ambassador, would you like to start?

Mr. KOVALEV. [Through interpreter] This is my own hypothesis that I could offer you. In fact, I do not have a hypothesis for you; I can just paraphrase my conversation recently with the former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia, Kozyrev. This conversation is already a year old, but I think it is still pertinent. Even then Minister Kozyrev said the Security Council, the Russian Security Council that made the decision to use military force in Chechnya, was misled by experts who promised in Chechnya almost a bloodless blitzkrieg. Now we understand we have got ourselves stuck in Chechnya. They all understand it, and the President understands this, too. But if the President and these were to admit this, they would be at the head of the list of guilty parties. Then he will not have any chance to win the election. At that time, Kozyrev was asking me about Zhirinovsky, but now he would probably ask me about Zyuganov. That basically is the explanation.

My hypothesis actually goes a little bit further. I said to Kozyrev after this conversation, I said, I don't believe that all your experts and all the members of the security council were fools. Wasn't there anybody who expressed a doubt that in the North Caucasus you would get this sort of bloodless, lightning quick victory? Incidentally, the security council was meeting already after the 26th of November. It was the hostilities of November 26th in Grozny that was the deciding factor in favor of military action in Chechnya. The Minister of Security totally shamed himself. He made this statement—by his actions—he made this statement that after the 26th there won't be any Dudayev in Grozny. So after this

total defeat on November 26th it was really easy to realize that you wouldn't have some walk in the park as far as the military victory was concerned in Chechnya.

Personally I could just explain the position of the Security Council in a very simple way. According to the old Soviet habit—I am emphasizing here the Soviet habit—an advisor is not supposed to give his boss the wisest advice. The advisor is supposed to follow which way the boss is leaning anyway. So the Security Council, including Kozyrev, they guessed that Yeltsin wanted to show that he is a determined individual and he is not about to untie a knot, but he's just going to cut it. There was another angle, too, to try to cover up the mistake that he made on November 26th. That is the way they resolve a lot of very important issues in Russia nowadays. I can remember once when they were slaughtering cows in Ryazan' during Khrushchev's time. The first secretary, Mr. Ladyonov, decided that he was going to overtake the oblast of Iowa in the output of meat.

Amb. MATLOCK. Iowa. That Ryazan' oblast would surpass Iowa in meat production.

INTERPRETER. I'm sorry. The state of Iowa in meat production.

Mr. KOVALEV. [Through Interpreter] So he just had all the stock slaughtered. All the American specialists and the agricultural experts just couldn't figure it out. Why are the Bolsheviks just slaughtering their stock? I read that these experts thought that they had maybe managed to get two calves as opposed to one when a cow gives birth. Or maybe they'd managed to produce a calf in a month and a half. It was not anything like this. Ladyonov wanted to win a medal, and he got his medal.

Mr. SMITH. Mr. Ambassador.

Amb. MATLOCK. Well, it is always impossible to say for certain what goes on in the mind of another person, but Dr. Kovalev's explanation of Yeltsin's likely motivations sounds absolutely correct to me. The dilemma he finds himself in now. Though Yeltsin knows it is a mistake, he is not in a position either politically or—if he should lose the next election—maybe legally to admit that he made that mistake. That is the dilemma he has, and it is not a pretty one.

Mr. SMITH. I have one final question, Mr. Ambassador. What are your recommendations on financial assistance and how we should condition aid. Mr. Kovalev in his testimony said, you know, give assistance and apply pressure. Should the IMF be providing loans? Should we be trying to influence that?

Amb. MATLOCK. I think the IMF loans should be based upon financial performance. Russia is not going to be able to pull out of its economic difficulties without a stable currency. As long as it follows policies that will lead to that, I think those loans should stay in place. I do not think they should be connected with other things. There are other types of pressure, such as the type he described in using the Council of Europe or using the OSCE and in private diplomacy, which should be used and used very vigorously. But I am not in favor of tying things like the currency stabilization loans, because I think there are other issues at stake, and one way one can preserve some leverage over the process of economic reform, which is quite imperfect up to now, is by maintaining these loans as long

as the conditions are met. Each loan and each of the aid projects should have its conditions, but they should be defined within the area to which it is addressed. I am dubious about tying them to other issues.

Mr. KOVALEV. [Through interpreter] I'm not a specialist in how diplomats exert pressure on their counterparts. I know that there are many ways and there are many specialists. But I would say that I do know that the aid that goes, for instance, to working to support civil society must be worked out together, and the people who give the money must also be involved in the dispersal.

Mr. SMITH. I want to thank our very distinguished witnesses for their very generous time this morning, and now it is afternoon. This hearing does help all of us become better informed. We will widely disseminate the hearing text, the record to the colleagues on both the House and the Senate side. I do thank you very much. This hearing is adjourned.

Amb. MATLOCK. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

[Whereupon at 12:00 p.m., the Commission adjourned.]

STATEMENT BY SERGEI KOVALEV, MEMBER OF THE STATE DUMA OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

HEARING ON CHECHNYA AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN RUSSIA

MARCH 6, 1996

Dear Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen:

When, a year ago, I had the honor of appearing before you, the situation in Russia was tragically undefined. The city of Grozny had already been destroyed, thousands and thousands of innocent persons had already perished. The trust of Russian society in the authorities who unleashed the war, after having declared their commitment to democracy, human rights and freedom, had been undermined. But there was still hope for an early peace, for a return to a slow but continual advance of Russia toward democracy and freedom. Since then, many events have taken place that have dispelled these hopes.

We have seen terrorist attacks in Budennovsk and Kizlar, attempts at negotiations and the resumption of military activity in its most despicable, drawn-out and cruel form. We have seen an unjustified punitive operation carried out in Samashki and a shameful act of revenge in Pervomaiskoe. We have seen phony elections in Chechnya, which have been declared genuine and valid. We have gone through parliamentary elections that have demonstrated a lack of cohesion among democratic politicians and brought victory to Communist forces who were able to take full advantage of public discontent. We see that with every passing day resources and power have become increasingly concentrated in the hands of "force structures" and special services outside civilian control. We see how the state apparatus ever more assertively rids itself of employees sympathetic to democracy, and puts in their place people of the opposite persuasion, frequently incompetent, besmirched, in fact, with lies and blood. We continue to hear every day blatant and senseless disinformation, emanating from highly placed government officials. We choke on pre-election demagoguery behind which there lies nothing except the desire for power.

Against this political backdrop, deterioration in the human rights situation should come as no surprise. Human rights violations in Russia have acquired a systematic and crude character, and not only on the territory of Chechnya. For specific facts and their substantiation, I would refer you to the detailed, although far from exhaustive, study of this problem contained in the recently released Report of the President's Commission on Human Rights. Incidentally a majority of the Commission's members have since resigned from the President's administration. (An English-language summary of this report for 1994-95 is available.)

An analysis of the situation in Russia shows that the vector of political and legal transformation is not headed in the direction of democracy and freedom. In my opinion, Russia is now going through a full- blown crisis of democracy. It is perhaps only a matter of months before this crisis reaches its fatal conclusion.

What is the outlook? Nowadays in Russia the major contenders for power, for the future of Russia, are forces that are equally alien to democracy, equally prepared to deny its legal and humanitarian values, and equally dismissive of public opinion.

On the one hand, we have today's power elite, who have established themselves and fortified their positions under the cover of democratic slogans. In reality, their basic goal was to redistribute state property and economic and political influence, and to dislodge the old Communist nomenklatura from key posts. Having carried out their basic task, they are naturally attempting to retain the fruits of their conquest. Democratic slogans used as an instrument of destruction are now out of place; they may, and they must, be compromised. It is not in the interest of this power elite to create a rule of law state. More appropriate for their current ambitions is the old principle of derzhavnost—the principle of state power standing above the individual and society. The dangers of a victory by this power elite are obvious even now. It would mean a complete derailment of political reforms, a subsequent reliance on force as the method of rule, politics of secrecy and unpredictability, the development of ultra patriotic ideology, and as a result, the orientation of Russia not toward the democratic West but toward the totalitarian East.

On the other hand, there are forces contending for power that are united under communist slogans, but in fact they are little different than competitors. Taking advantage of obvious miscalculations in the economic and social policies of the government, these forces mobilize large numbers of voters who are nostalgic for those times when they were responsible for nothing, when the government provided them with a meager, but relatively carefree existence. The victory of the Communists, despite the restraint of their public slogans, will lead to a thirst for revenge, and the destruction of those fragile shoots of democracy, to which our country gave birth in the past decade. You can be sure that this force will make full use of the ideology and methodology of derzhamost, which is organic to Russian communism. I probably don't even need to mention the aggressive isolationism of the Communists, which the West still remembers.

There is still a third organized force in Russia—nationalism. Today, however, it plays more of an auxiliary role. On one flank, it surreptitiously saturates the ideology of derzhavnost and communism with an additional charge of fascism and xenophobia, while on the other it draws to itself the impulse of public fear.

Any one of these three forces might win in Russia, but their victory would mean the defeat of democratic reforms, and a rejection of the priority (or at least, the parity) of human rights over the principle of political expediency. And in quick order, the victors will begin to speak in tough terms not only to their fellow citizens, but also to the West, which will naturally engender a tough response.

A dramatic paradox of this situation is that the only force opposing antidemocratic tendencies in Russia is badly organized. But at least this is no longer just a handful of dissidents as in the Brezhnev era. if in our country civil society is gaining strength and a free press is still functioning, the credit for this does not belong to Yeltsin, but to democratically-thinking politicians, civic activists,

and simply honest people. The intellectual and spiritual face of Russia is represented by and large by people of democratic convictions. And democratic voters outnumber the anti-democratic electorate. But democrats, unfortunately, have not learned to conduct politics in a well-coordinated and clear fashion; true, they also haven't learned to deal in dirty tricks. Therefore, their chances are not great. But we can hope that the democratic forces will unite, and if it is impossible to win, at least a unified democratic opposition will be created, which will help limit the totalitarian tendencies of any antidemocratic regime.

This is the political reality of contemporary Russia. I understand that you are interested most of all in the influence that the changes in Russia may have on world politics and on the politics of the United States.

I don't consider it possible to give any kind of advice. But, as I see it, the democratic nations of the West should have a two-track policy, which was expressed by Academic Sakharov in his day: assistance and pressure. Assist, and effectively assist—the growing civil society and democratic movement in [our] country. Exert pressure, and strong pressure—on those forces that oppose peace, human rights, and progress. At the same time, one should realize that commitment to democracy is defined not by government posts and slogans but by concrete actions.

A union of the West and Russia is indispensable. And the problem is not that, otherwise, an isolated Russia, with its nuclear technology, will fall into the arms of the East. Partnership with Russia must be based not on fear, but on your desire to help the society of Russia recover from the totalitarian disease, to help the culture of Russia return to our shared home. Only together can we overcome the global dangers of the 21st century: a deficit of energy sources, ecological catastrophe, and the new threat of nuclear confrontation. For this reason, the West must take upon itself the arduous, daily commitment to support the process of genuine, and not nominal, entry of Russia onto the path of democracy.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE BY JACK F. MATLOCK, JR.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE CONFLICT IN CHECHNYA

It is an honor to appear before this Committee, and in particular to share the platform with Sergei Kovalev, who is far better informed about conditions in Chechnya than I am. As I wrote a year ago, he is one of the few heroes emerging from the tragedy of the war in Chechnya. His actions in documenting the atrocities which have been committed have played a key role In alerting his own countrymen and the world public as a whole to the situation there. One would despair for the prospects of creating a democracy in Russia were it not for people like Sergei Kovalev.

The war in Chechnya continues without an end in sight. At times, President Yeltsin seems to understand the importance of ending the conflict, but more frequently his decisions have had the effect of prolonging it. We can hope that the desire to improve his standing in advance of the presidential election in June will give President Yeltsin a strong motivation to stop the fighting, but we as yet see little concrete evidence that this will happen.

Meanwhile, the damage to Russia mounts. The bungled attempt to subdue Chechnya has laid bare the weakness of the Russian armed forces just as, earlier, the failure to deal with the problem by administrative means revealed the weakness and, indeed, corruption, of the Russian administrative and law enforcement bodies. It is a tragic conflict in which there can be, and will be, no winners. All friends of Russia should appeal to the Russian authorities to end this senseless conflict, not only because it is an affront to humanity, but also because it is damaging to Russia itself .

As we condemn the methods used to deal with the Chechen rebellion, however, we should be careful not to idealize or condone the Chechen leaders who created the conditions which precipitated the Russian military intervention. We should recognize that the Russian authorities confronted an armed rebellion, not a peaceful effort to achieve national autonomy or independence. Dzhokar Dudayev and his associates seized power in 1991 by a military coup d'etat and never allowed an unfettered vote in what was then Chechen-Ingushetia. No self-respecting government could allow such a situation to persist within its borders without efforts to bring it to an end. The Russian government obviously chose the wrong method in December 1994 when it mounted a full-scale military invasion, but this should not obscure the shared responsibility of Chechnya's breakaway regime that chose from the outset to use military force rather than the tools of democracy to achieve its political goals.

In short, the invasion of Chechnya is not comparable to the Chinese slaughter of peaceful demonstrators in Tianamnen Square, and the Chechen rebellion is not comparable to the peaceful democratic movements in the Baltic states which sought -- ultimately successfully -- to free their countries from Soviet rule. Brutality and guilt are not the exclusive possessions of one side in this tragic conflict.

That makes it particularly difficult for foreign governments to deal with the issue. In one sense, the Russian government has the night to suppress armed rebellion within its borders, and few governments would wish to challenge this principle. But in another sense, the methods used have violated solemn commitments undertaken by the Russian government in the Helsinki Final Act, in particular. But these are political commitments which do not have the force of law or treaties.

Some Americans argue that the U.S. Government should do more to put Russia under pressure to end the war in Chechnya, by indulging in sharper criticism of the acts of violence in the region and curtailing economic and political cooperation with Russia so long as the war persists. In my judgment, such steps would not be wise. They would be most unlikely to shorten the war but would entail a serious political cost. If aid projects are meeting their goals, they should be continued. Both the U.S. and Russia stand to benefit, and they should not be turned on and off for extraneous reasons. Political sanctions are even more inappropriate since they reinforce the false image many Russian "superpatriots" have of the United States as an enemy power. There is no rational reason for Russia and the United States to be adversaries, and we should not strengthen the hand of chauvinist forces in Russia by appearing to desire dismemberment of the country.

Does this mean that we should simply stand by and do nothing? Certainly not. Our official representatives should make a consistent effort, in their private dialogue with the Russian Government, to press for an end to the war and for more regard for the human rights of Russian citizens in the area. This is an issue on which public organizations like Helsinki Watch and other unofficial human rights organizations have an important role to play. They should bring to light atrocities when they occur, and they should be even handed about it. It is Just as much an atrocity to kill and kidnap innocent civilians by acts of terrorism as It is to bombard defenseless cities. Such tactics should not and must not be condoned, anywhere and for any reason. We should also urge the Russian Government to expand the role of OSCE representatives in mediating the conflict. They can set a very useful precedent for peacemaking if they can secure the cooperation of both sides to the conflict.

Ultimately, it is Russia itself that is most damaged by the conflict and the Russian political leadership should have no higher priority than bringing it to an end. We can best show our friendship for the development of a democratic Russia by impressing this truth upon the Russian authorities.

TESTIMONY BY ANATOL LIEVEN, SENIOR FELLOW, UNITED STATES INSTITUTE OF PEACE

Mr Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The prospects for peace in Chechnya look grim. Last year's OSCE-brokered truce between the Russian army and the Chechen independence forces has now definitively broken down. To judge by what I saw and heard during my last visit to Chechnya in December, there is little reason for optimism about the chances of future cease fires, at least as long as the present leaders of Russia and Chechnya remain in office.

The Yeltsin administration is urging the OSCE to recognize the legitimacy of the Russian-backed government of Doku Zavgayev, but this government is opposed by the great majority of Chechens, and Mr Zavgayev's so-called "election" in December was a farce. The Russian government has signed an agreement with Mr Zavgayev promising Chechnya the widest possible autonomy, but the separatist forces under President Dzhokhar Dudayev continue to insist on full independence, and refuse any contacts with Mr Zavgayev. President Yeltsin's promises of a new peace formula worked out by a commission under Premier Chernomyrdin appear wholly insincere, and may be intended mainly to throw blame for failure onto the Prime Minister.

The Chechen raid in January into the neighboring republic of Daghestan, which led to the mass taking of civilian hostages and a bloody siege, has once again exposed the extreme weakness and demoralization of the Russian armed forces, which proved incapable of preventing the escape of most of the Chechen fighters involved. The Chechen fighters have followed up this success with a series of attacks on Russian convoys. The Russians have responded with punitive bombardments of villages both in Chechnya and neighboring Ingushetia, causing numerous civilian casualties. There can be little doubt that a continued intensification of the fighting will lead to further human rights abuses on the part of Russian troops, and further terrorist actions by the Chechen separatists.

Last year's truce failed for two reasons, which will also threaten any future attempt at a ceasefire. The first is that at bottom there is nothing to talk about. Dudayev's demand for full independence and the withdrawal of all Russian troops is unacceptable to the Yeltsin government and probably to any Russian administration. Under different leaderships, some sort of face-saving formula might be found, but the Yeltsin administration has now invested massive political capital in its Chechen allies and in the fight against Dudayev. Compromise with the separatists would be a massive and probably fatal humiliation for Yeltsin - after all, in recent weeks he has threatened to have Dudayev executed.

As for Dudayev, he lacks the diplomatic skill and self-discipline to negotiate a compromise, and he probably also does not have enough authority over his own men to get them to accept a deal short of full independence. It is not true that Dudayev personally enjoys the support of a great majority of Chechens; indeed, I have

found him widely unpopular even among pro-independence fighters. But there is no way that these fighters or their commanders are going to get rid of Dudayev at Russia's behest. This is true for example of the leading Chechen military commander, General Aslan Maskhadov. He is widely seen as a much more rational and responsible figure than Dudayev, and there is evidence of deep differences between him and the President; but General Maskhadov is also a passionately committed Chechen nationalist, and he has rejected all Russian attempts to get him to abandon Dudayev and sign a separate peace. You often hear Chechen fighters say the following, in different variants: "I am not fighting for Dudayev, but for Chechnya, and I will fight until I am dead or Chechnya is independent."

The only significant neutral political figure in Chechnya is former Russian parliamentary chairman and Yeltsin rival Ruslan Khasbulatov, who still seems to have considerable support among ordinary Chechens, many of whom, while they hate the Russians, also dislike Dudayev and are desperate for peace. But for obvious reasons, he has been completely sidelined by the Yeltsin administration. He is also detested by Dudayev and the pro-independence forces, so that even if some future Russian government were to try to use him as an intermediary, his chances of taking power and bringing about peace appear very slight.

Nevertheless, despite the lack of prospects for a general political agreement, General Maskhadov does seem sincerely to have tried to get last year's truce to stick, and that was also true of his Russian counterpart, General Anatoly Romanov. The problem is that neither of them really controlled all the forces on their respective sides. The Chechen independence forces are obviously very loosely structured, and as long as there are Russian troops in Chechnya, some of them will go on having a crack at them, irrespective of agreements or orders from above - which is exactly what they did throughout the period of the truce. On the Russian side, apart from the differences between hawks and doves in the administration in Moscow, there are Chechen allies whose own political or even physical survival depends on their preventing an agreement between Dudayev and Moscow. In November of last year, General Romanov was critically injured by a car bomb in Grozny which also finally killed off the ceasefire. The Russian government of course blamed the Dudayev forces; but there is also a widespread private suspicion, even on the Russian side, that the real perpetrators may have been pro-Russian Chechens determined to wreck any peace process.

Despite predictions last year, the Chechen war has not led to a general anti-Russian revolt in the North Caucasus, and seems unlikely to do so, for two reasons. The first is that the Chechens are widely disliked for their arrogance and contempt for their fellow Caucasians - an attitude demonstrated by the taking of Daghestani hostages in January. The second reason is that while the other North Caucasians may dislike the Russians, every other North Caucasian republic but Chechnya also has profound internal ethnic divisions. Anti-Russian revolt would therefore almost inevitably set off a whole series of bloody local civil wars - and the leaders of the

other republics know this. Islam is also generally weaker in these areas than in Chechnya.

Nor has Chechnya affected relations between Moscow and other autonomous republics like Tatarstan, Bashkortostan and Yakutia, except insofar as it has tended to weaken the authority of the central government. As the last parliamentary elections showed, these republics now occupy very strong places in the Russian polity, guaranteed by treaties with Moscow. Their ruling groups are wooed by both the Russian government and the Russian communist and nationalist oppositions.

In a historical perspective, the most striking aspect of the Chechen War may be seen as its revelation of the weakness of the Russian army, and the lack of desire of the Russian people for military operations, even against an enemy as widely disliked as the Chechens. At present therefore, the idea of a direct Russian military threat to Ukraine, the Baltic States or Eastern Europe seems pure fantasy.

There is a danger however that Russian attitudes towards Chechnya could be radicalised if the Chechen independence forces carry out bloody terrorist attacks in Moscow and elsewhere in the heart of Russia. This might lead to the deportation of the Chechen community in Moscow - something, which the Russian security services have reportedly already privately threatened - and a greatly intensified campaign of terror against the population of Chechnya itself, something which has so far been inhibited by the Russian desire to keep at least a few Chechen allies. This could also spill over into spontaneous Russian attacks on Caucasians in general, thereby spreading anti- Russian feeling and the possibility that the war might in fact spread. As the seizure of a ferry off Istanbul by Chechen sympathizers in January shows, the Chechens may also be able to carry out terrorist acts beyond Russia's borders.

When I interviewed Chechen military commander Shamil Basayev in December, he said that he regarded terrorist attacks in Russia, even to the extent of attacking Russian nuclear power stations, as morally justified in view of Russian tactics within Chechnya - for example, a Russian bombing raid which killed much of his own family. However, I also saw him assure a meeting of local Chechen notables that he would prevent attacks on Russian troops in their area, so as not to draw down Russian reprisals. Mr Basayev is also believed to have disapproved of the latest raid into Daghestan, which appears to have been the work of Dudayev. There is some hope therefore that Chechen commanders will in fact be restrained in their use of the terrorist weapon - but the temptation to use it so as to weaken the Yeltsin administration in the run-up to Russia's June presidential elections will obviously be immense.

The West clearly has a strong interest in trying to act through the OSCE or other bodies to bring peace to Chechnya, or at least to bring about a new ceasefire. It is possible that sheer mutual exhaustion will in fact sooner or later lead to this. At present however both sides are hostile to any Western mediation. The Russians insist on the impossible condition of the recognition of their Chechen administration; while Dudayev, when I met him in De-

cember, expressed himself in the most contemptuous and hostile terms about the OSCE, the UN and the West in general, describing us as cowards and Russian slaves. He seems to be motivated by a mixture of the Islamic feeling which has grown noticeably in Chechnya during the war, and by sheer rage at the West's failure to side with Chechnya against Russia.

I am sorry not to be able to give a more hopeful picture or more positive advice. I myself believe that the tremendous courage and tenacity demonstrated by the Chechen separatist forces will sooner or later achieve independence for Chechnya, given the underlying lack of will demonstrated by the Russian side; I also fear that this independence is likely to come only through further and greater bloodshed.

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